



# Idsall External Examinations Policy

## Sponsorship & Review

### 1 Sponsor

Mr D Crichton, Deputy Headteacher

### 2 Written and Approved

October 2014

### 3 Next Review Date

October 2016

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Controlled Assessment Policy 2014-16

# External Examinations 2014-2016

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff
- to ensure the security of Idsall School as an examination centre

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed every two years by the head of centre, leadership team, examination officer and governors.

## Exam responsibilities

### Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. For advice... refer to the JCQ document

### Examination Officer

Administration of public and internal exams and provision of exam results:

- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Informs teaching staff of coursework/controlled assessment deadlines and in 'signposts' information on relevant JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers applications for special consideration using the JCQ special considerations regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- Liaises with the Support for Learning department regarding students identified for Access Arrangements and their identified needs.
- Completes on-line applications relating to access arrangements and following discussions with the Support for Learning team, will organise rooming, seating plans, modified papers and appropriate support for students eligible for Access Arrangements
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Prepares seating plans for external examinations
- As the examinations budget holder, inform the Business Manager of any relevant financial data relating to examination entries and invigilation costs

- Line manages the exams invigilators, organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators, readers and scribes.
- Assists subject leaders in the submission of candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks and distribute returned coursework/controlled assessment and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies to Subject Leaders for storage
- Liaises with subject leaders with regard to estimated grades and information required for entries.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Prepares seating plans for relevant examinations
- Quality assure the examination process
- Makes arrangements to distribute, via subject leader pigeon holes, any unused question papers from the day after the examination.

#### Deputy Head

- Line management of the relevant curricular and examinations processes

#### Subject Leaders and Learning Manager

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Appropriate support of students through Individual Advice and Guidance
- Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- It is the responsibility of the relevant Learning Manager to inform students of the overall code of conduct required in exams.
- It is the responsibility of subject teachers to ensure students are aware of the requirements of the examination and the equipment/resources required.
- Students should be familiar with the format of the examinations via their subject teachers.

#### SENCO

- Advice on access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Liaison with LSAT team regarding 'history of need' and testing
- Completion of Sections A and B of Form 8
- Liaison with parents regarding LSAT testing, the needs identified and the Access Arrangements to which their child is entitled
- Teaching staff informed regarding Exam Entitlement
- Assess the availability of TA support for each examination to allow the Exam Officer to calculate the need for appropriate additional support via the invigilation team

#### Lead invigilator/invigilators

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Recording and reporting required information in the exam.
- Reporting of and 'incidents' during the exam to the Examination Officer
- If a serious problem occurs, the Lead Invigilator will make the decision to call in the Exam Officer or dial 222 to call for a member of the Leadership Team to support.

#### Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework/controlled assessment as their own.

#### Administrative staff

- Any additional administrative support
- Posting of exam papers and coursework/controlled assessment samples.

## Exam Seasons and Timetables

#### Exam seasons

The timing of internal exams is kept under review by the Leadership Team.

- The main external exams are scheduled in June with some re-take exams in Maths and English in November.
- Subject Leaders under the Leadership Team decide which examination series will be used in the centre.

#### Timetables

- The exams officer will circulate the outline exam board timetables for external exams once these are received from the exam boards. Detailed School Exam Timetables will be circulated after the last date for withdrawals of any exam session.
- The exams officer will circulate the individualised exam timetables to pupils, two weeks prior to the date of the exams.
- The school website will be used to provide information to support candidates and their families.
- The Assistant Head (with the Exams Officer) will devise and publish any internal exam schedules

## Entries, coursework and controlled assessments, late entries and retakes

In line with the general school policy every student should be encouraged to complete examination/course preparations and coursework/controlled assessment to the best of their ability. Examinations 'success' must be viewed in relative terms and wherever possible students must be given the opportunity to complete courses and embark upon final assessment.

The school is responsible for ensuring all students have the best possible chances of success in external examinations and that students are not disadvantaged by organisational or curricular failures.

The school Examinations Officer with the Learning Manager is responsible for taking steps to ensure that individual examination entries are accurate and fully understood by the students.

#### Entries

- All candidates are entitled to have access to the examination. Specific decisions about entries, including tier of entry, are taken by the subject teachers under the moderation of the subject leader and SLT Line Manager.
- Candidates, or parents, may request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal with the Subject Leader. (Payment may be required – see 'Exam Fees') The final decision rests with the Head of Centre through the relevant Line Manager.

The outline for examination entries is as follows:

1. Staff are issued with teaching group lists. These are marked to indicate possible entries and returned to the Examinations Officer, who checks for anomalies and queries.
2. The Examination Officer submits entries to the examination boards and provides teaching staff with printed entry lists. Parents will also be informed at this stage of the process. These are checked and amended if necessary.
3. Once entries have been finalised, students receive a printed timetable of their exams, which they check for accuracy. Any errors are corrected by the Examinations Officer. Students are issued with new timetables when the amendments have been made.
4. It is the responsibility of Subject Leaders to ensure that accurate entry information is received by the Examinations Officer before the deadlines stipulated by the examinations board. Late entry or amendment fees will be charged to the relevant department.
5. The school reserves the right to charge students late entry or amendment fees where the responsibility for entry omissions/amendments is judged to rest with the student/parent.

#### Coursework and controlled assessments

For each student/examination group the following routines should be followed:

- Subject Leaders are responsible for making every effort to ensure that coursework/controlled assessment and other requirements for examination course are met by the students to the best of their abilities.
- The subject teachers should ensure that students understand the assessment requirements of the course including the examinations papers and the role of any coursework/controlled assessment in the process.
- The subject teacher should ensure that students are aware of their level of entry for the subject and the particular examination papers that are appropriate.
- The subject teacher should ensure that students are aware of any deadlines for coursework/controlled assessment and the importance of meeting these. Monitoring by teachers should provide early warnings concerning those who are falling behind with coursework/controlled assessment. Where deadlines are not met by students the

subject teacher should inform the Subject Leader. It is an important departmental responsibility to ensure that parents/guardians are informed as soon as possible of a student's failure to meet an academic deadline.

- The Learning Manager for the year must also be informed.
- The Learning Manager should monitor students to ensure that they are coping with coursework/controlled assessment requirements.
- Action may be taken by the Learning Manager to modify the demands upon students who are finding the combined course requirements unexpectedly demanding.
- The subject teachers should provide feedback on coursework/controlled assessment and details of omissions or possible amendments as soon as possible. Students should not be disadvantaged by being confronted with further, last minute coursework/controlled assessment requirements.
- Examination board requirements regarding the assistance of students with coursework/controlled assessment must be known and adhered to.
- Subject Leaders and Learning Manager should consult upon coursework/controlled assessment deadlines in order to spread demands as far as possible at an early point.

#### Late entries

- Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders via email and school diary.
- Late entries are authorised by the relevant members of the Leadership Team.
- Late entry fees should be charged to the department where the late entry/amendment is caused by error or omission at department or faculty level.

#### Resits

- Candidates are allowed to retake subjects at GCSE, AS and A level. The school will usually make a charge for this.
- Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, the heads of subject and Line managers. (See also : Exam fees)

#### Exam fees

- GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.
- Late entry or amendment fees may be charged to departments (see also : Late Entries)
- Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies. Any made out of the time allowed by the awarding bodies will be charged to the department.
- Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam, commit malpractice or meet the necessary coursework/controlled assessment requirements.
- This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.
- Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes may be required to be paid by the candidates
- Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. Fees are required to be

paid to the school before an EAR will be submitted (See also : Enquiries about results [EARs])

## The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

### DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### Special needs

- A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the educational psychologist / specialist teacher / SENCO.
- The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

### Access arrangements

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the exams officer, informed by advice from the SENCO.
- Completing access arrangement applications is the responsibility of the SENCO; submitting these to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer.
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer in consultation with the Support for Learning team.
- Allocation of staff to support access arrangements for candidates will be organised by the exams officer after liaison with the Support for Learning team.

## Estimated grades

### Estimated grades

The heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer according to the timescales given in the Entry Procedure Policy.

## Managing invigilators and exam days

### Managing invigilators

- External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.
- They will be used for all external exams.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.
- Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Personnel Manager.
- CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by Shropshire County Council.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Personnel Manager in liaison with the Finance and Services Manager.

## Exam days

- The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
- The Caretakers are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and returning rooms to their 'normal' state.
- The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates and must act entirely in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- In practical exams, subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

## Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

### Candidates

- The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.
- Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of the invigilation staff must accompany them.
- The invigilators will notify the Exam Officer who will try to make contact with the candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

### Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

### Special consideration

- Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the Exam Officer, to that effect.
- Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## Appeals against Internal Assessment of Work for External Qualifications

Idsall School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assesses students' work for external qualification; this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualifications concerned. Assessments are conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills and who have been trained in this activity. The school is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications of each subject. Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency.



If a student feels that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, then he/she may make use of this appeals procedure.

Not that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grades submitted by the school for moderation by the awarding body.

- Appeals should be made as early as possible and at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examination series (e.g. the last GCSE written paper in the June exam series).
- The candidate's parent/guardian must make the appeal in writing to the Examinations Officer, who will pass the information to their Line Manager who will investigate the appeal with at least two other members of staff who have not been involved in the internal assessment decision.
- The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the JCQ.
- The Line Manager who conducted the investigation will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the appeal including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to the procedure relating to internal assessment.
- If the candidate is not happy with the written report they have received, they may request a personal hearing before an appeals panel. This must be within two working days of receipt of the written reply to the original appeal.
- The appeals panel will consist of a senior member of staff, the Achievement Leader and a school governor. The candidate will be given at least two days notice of the hearing date and will be given a breakdown of the marks awarded in advance of the appeal. The candidate (plus a parent/guardian if requested) and teacher(s) involved will be present at the hearing.
- The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Headteacher and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the awarding the body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. This is outside the control of Idsall School and is not covered by this procedure. Each awarding body has its own appeal procedure which is available from the Examinations Officer.

## Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

### Enquiries about External Assessment Marks

Where a candidate is unhappy with the mark awarded for a particular exam unit (e.g. written exam etc) a clerical check or re-mark may be requested via the Exams Office. The candidate will be required to acknowledge (by completing the appropriate request form) that his/her grade may be confirmed, raised or lowered. Where the school does not support the request, the candidate will be responsible for paying the relevant fee. The decision as to whether to support an enquiry will be made by the school on the basis of several factors, including knowledge of the exams system and professional judgement.

## Results

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Business Manager.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher.
- Certification for post-16 students- all students that are expected to achieve a grade at AS should be entered for certification. All students must be certificated at A2.

## EARs

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged. (See : Exam fees)

## ATS

- After the release of results, candidates may ask the Exam Officer to request the return of papers and payment will be required.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer and teaching staff will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark which will be at the candidate's expense.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
- GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## Certificates

- Certificates are collected in person to pupils who remain on roll at the school from the Exam Office. Pupils who have left collect and sign for their certificates from the Exam Office
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authority to do so.
- The school website will be used to announce the availability of Exam Certificates.

## Teachers' Workload Agreement

Under the new Workload Initiative regulations there are many jobs that teachers have traditionally done which are now the responsibilities of others. All invigilation of written external examinations is carried out by our external invigilators. We have a team of 0 invigilators who have received training and they are deployed by our Examinations Officer to examination rooms, they deal with all aspects of examinations.

There is still a need for teachers who are responsible for particular subjects to take some measure of responsibility for the examinations in that subject.

The responsibility is however limited and is set out below. The arrangements have been made on the basis of how the Workload Initiative regulations will be interpreted but may be subject to change.

For practical examinations it may be necessary for a subject specialist teacher to be present, for example in Art where the students are allowed to discuss certain aspects of their work as they progress, in Physics where a specialist is needed to deal with equipment, in Modern Foreign Languages Oral exam or in Home Economics where marking takes place throughout the examination. There are other examinations where tapes or CD's need to be played. For IT and BCS examinations there must be present an invigilator who is conversant with the software and the systems but if they are a teacher they should not be the sole invigilator. There will undoubtedly be other examinations where special arrangements need to be put in place.

#### Written Papers.

There is no longer a requirement that subject leaders check papers on receipt by the school. They should be available to discuss aspects of the examination if there are queries raised by either the examination board (as recently about possible missing pages in an Anthology) or if the Examination Officer requests your help.

#### Examination room etiquette.

For each examination room there is a Senior Invigilator who is responsible for all aspects of the examination. It is their responsibility to ensure all the rules and regulations are followed and specifically they are responsible for the papers and starting and finishing the examinations. At the time of the sitting of the examination subject leaders and/or members of their team are encouraged to be outside the examination room helping to settle the candidates before they enter the room. Subject Leaders who wish to have an input inside the examination room should discuss it with the Exam Officer first to ensure no examination rules are breached.

So that the start of every examination for every candidate is the same, assistance in seating candidates giving out papers or reading out rules and regulations is NOT required from subject teachers; the invigilation team will take sole responsibility for these tasks.

Please be aware of the fact that subject teachers must not have access to exam papers until all examination papers are accounted for and secured by the Exam Officer.

#### Tasks carried out by Invigilators/ Examination Officer

Some task that will be carried by the Invigilators out will be ones which Subject Leaders will have carried out in the past. The following list is not exhaustive in any way.

- Transporting examination papers to the Exam room.
- Completing the attendance sheet.
- Reading the rules to the candidates prior to the start of the examination.
- Writing up starting and finishing times on the board in the examination room.
- Invigilating the examination.
- Finishing the examination, collection and completion of register.
- The Exam Officer will package all examination papers after checking.

Head of Centre

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Exams Officer

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Date

October 2014

The policy is next due for review in the Autumn Term 2016